(b) if so, what are the reasons for such disruption; and

(c) the measures taken by Government to expand and improve the telephone networks in Manipur?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) There have been some disruptions of telecom network in Manipur except in Imphal town.

(b) Most of them are generally caused by very frequent power breakdown daily (especially outside Imphal town) coupled with the shortage of diesel in the districts and the difficulties experienced in transportation of men and material to the telecom installations due to the disturbed condition in Manipur.

(c) Continuous measures have been taken to expand and improve the telephone networks of Manipur. The growth rate of 33% in rural areas and 16% in urban area in working telephone connections has been achieved in Manipur on an average during the last three years apart from commissioning of 3000 lines new technology trunk automatic Exchange at Imphal, Internet node in April 2001, 2 major optical fibre cable routes, viz., Imphal-Morech & Imphal-Churachandpur and a major Microwave route, *viz.*, Imphal-Silchar.

The measures proposed to be taken to improve and expand the telephone network in Manipur during 2001-2002 are given below:

(i) Commissioning of reliable media for remaining six exchanges to make all the exchanges connected on reliable media in Manipur

(ii) Opening of new exchanges and upgradation/expansion of some existing exchanges

(iii) Introduction of Wireless in the Local Loop (WLL) phones.

Outstanding dues against cellular operators

996. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that huge amount of dues is outstanding against the cellular operators;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for allowing the accumulation of such outstanding dues; and

(c) the steps taken and proposed to be taken by Government to recover the outstanding dues from the cellular operators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Sir, a sum of Rs. 549.38 crores (excluding interest) it outstanding towards License fee and Rs. 138.51 crores is outstanding against Wireless Spectrum charges from Cellular Service Licensees. The details are given in the Statement (*See* below). These License fee dues are in respect of 4 terminated licenses and one working UP (East) Circle Cellular License. Demands were raised against cellular operators for payment of outstanding license fees dues along with interest and securitisation of dues etc. from time to time. Service providers had been requesting for several relief like moratorium on license fee payments, extension of period of license etc. on various grounds. Delays in clearance by various authorities, Governmental bodies and agencies were also urged for grant of relief. The Government as a pro-tem measure pending finalization of New Telecom Policy-1999 (NTP-99) asked the licensees on 25.1.99 to pay the dues and agreed to extension of the date of payment of license fee upto 28.2.99, provided by that date the licensee in order to establish their bonafides paid atleast 20% of the arrears, as these licensees failed to pay 20% of the arrears, Bank Guarantees were invoked. Litigation ensued in the high Courts, mainly in Delhi High Court. The licenses were terminated for failure to pay where there was no stay from Courts and fallback option to subscribers to avail service from other operator was available.

The Wireless spectrum dues have accummulated because the licensees have disputed the formula for calculation of Royalty and license fee for spectrum usage and have been making part payments instead of full payments.

(c) Steps had been taken by the Government to recover the license fee dues by encashment of the Bank Guarantees and termination of the licenses. The licensees were also offered a restoration cum migration package for clearance of dues, which could not materialize further course of action to recover the existing dues is under consideration.

With regard to Wireless spectrum dues, notices/reminders were issued to the licensees for clearing their dues. However, instead of payment of dues, the licensees have filed petition with Telecom Dispute Settlement and Arbitration Tribunal (TDSAT) in this regard. Further action can be taken depending upon the TDSAT Judgment.

Statement

Outstanding dues against cellular operators

(As on 30.6.2001)

Amount Rupees in Crores

Sl. No.	Name of the compnay	Service Area	License fee due**	Wireless specturm charges due
A SERVICE CMTS (TELECOM CIRCLES)				
1.	Aircell	Rajasthan	nil	4.56
	Digilink	Haryana	nil	3.61
		UP (East)	nil	6.89
2.	Birla AT&T	Gujarat	nil	4.30
		Maharashtra	nil	8.68
3.	Fascel	Gujarat	nil	0.28
4.	Hexacom	Rajasthan	nil	2.81
		North East	nil	nil
5.	Bharti	Punjab*	258.60	5.41
	Mobile	Andhra	Nil	1.62
		Karnataka	Nil	4.00
6.	Koshika	Bihar*	33.77	10.45
		Orissa*	49.15	2.65
		UP (East)	167.01	14.77
		UP (West)*	40.85	13.40
7.	Spice Com.	Karnataka	nil	1.42
		Punjab	nil	5.60
8.	RPG	M.P.	nil	3.33
9.	Escotel	Haryana	nil	7.54
		Kerala	nil	11.51
		UP (West)	nil	12.83
10.	Reliance	W.B.	nil	nil
		Assam	nil	nil
		Bihar	nil	nil
		H.P.	nil	nil
		M.P.	nil	nil
		Orissa	nil	nil
		North East	nil	nil

Sl. No.	Name of the compnay	Service Area	License fee due**	Wireless specturm charges due
11.	BPL US West	Kerala	nil	4.37
		T.N.	nil	5.12
		Maharashtra	nil	0.94
12.	Tata	A.P.	nil	0.62
13.	Bharti Telenet	H.P.	nil	1.80
14.	Aircel	T.N.	nil	nil
	Cellular Circle Sub Total (A)		**549.38**	**138.51**
	B SERVICE CMTS (METRO CITIES)			
1.	Bharti	Delhi	nil	nil
2.	Sterling	Delhi	nil	nil
3.	H. Max	Mumbai	nil	nil
4.	BPL	Mumbai	nil	nil
5.	Skycell	Chennai	nil	nil
6.	RPG	Chennai	nil	nil
7.	Spice Cell	Kolkatta	nil	nil
8.	Usha	Kolkatta	nil	nil
Metro Cellular Sub Total (B)			nil	nil
	Cellular Circle Sub Total (A)		**549.38**	**138.51**
	Metro Cellular Sub Total (B)		nil	nil
Grand Total (A) & (B)			**549.38**	**138.51**

Note: **License fee dues are upto date of termination.*
***This excludes interest.*